U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO 81641

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2004-082-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): COC-10178 (#4-8-1S-103), COC-56873 (#14-18-1S-103)

PROJECT NAME: APDs for #4-8, & #14-18

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T1S, R103W, SWSW sec.8 (#4-8), NENW sec.18 (#14-18), 6th P.M.

APPLICANT: EVERGREEN OPERATING CORPORATION

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Background/Introduction:

Proposed Action: The applicant proposes to construct access roads, well pads, and install buried steel 4"O.D. pipelines for two well locations. The associated surface disturbance for each well location would be as follows: **#4-8** approx. **3.33 acres** (access road 1584' x 30' ROW-1.1 ac., pipeline 1584' x 20' addl. ROW-0.73 ac., well pad 300' x 200' -1.5 ac.), **#14-18** approx. **1.68 acres** (150' x 30' ROW-0.11 ac., pipeline 150' x 20' addl. ROW-0.07 ac., well pad 300' x 200'-1.5 ac.). Total surface disturbance for the proposed action would be approximately 5.01 acres. If a well is a producer, area not needed for production would be contoured and seeded. If a well is a non-producer, the well would be plugged and all disturbed areas would be contoured and seeded. Vegetation would be established to the satisfaction of the BLM.

No Action Alternative: There would be no additional environmental impacts from the no action alternative.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD:

NEED FOR THE ACTION: To respond to the request by the applicant to exercise lease rights and develop hydrocarbon reserves.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: Page 2-5

Decision Language: "Make federal oil and gas resources available for leasing and development in a manner that provides reasonable protection for other resource values."

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH: In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: The entire White River RA has been designated as either attainment or unclassified for all pollutants, and most of the area has been designated prevention of significant deterioration (PSD) class II.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would result in short term, local impacts to air quality during construction, from fugitive dust being blown into the air.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Under the no action alternative, there would be no adverse affects on air quality.

Mitigation: Require the operator will utilize dust abatement measures to control fugitive dust as needed.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: #4-8-1S-103 well pad, access road and well tie pipeline: The proposed well pad, access road and well tie pipeline area from the #13-17 well pad have been

inventoried at the Class III (100% pedestrian) level (Scott 2003, Compliance Dated 1/15/2004) with no new cultural resources identified on the surface in the inventory area.

#14-18-1S-103 well pad, access road and well tie pipeline: the proposed well pad, access route and well tie pipeline area have been inventoried at the Class III (100% pedestrian) level (Scott 2003, Compliance Dated 1/13/2003) with no new cultural resources identified on the surface in the inventory area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: #4-8-1S-103 well pad, access road and well tie pipeline: the proposed well pad location, access road and well tie pipeline will not impact any known cultural resources. While subsurface resources are not likely they cannot be completely ruled out.

#14-18-1S-103 well pad, access road and well tie pipeline: the proposed well pad location, access road and well tie pipeline will not impact any known cultural resources. While subsurface resources are not likely they cannot be completely ruled out.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to cultural resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: 1. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to

proceed by the authorized officer.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES/RECLAMATION: (This includes vegetation information related to Public Land Health Standard 3.)

Affected Environment: The proposed project is within the salt desert shrub and juniper woodland vegetation associations. The salt desert shrub soils are moderately deep and also derived from shale. This soil is saline which makes for difficult reclamation. The juniper woodland soils in this area are shallow and shale derived. Past reclamation efforts have included non-native species, which have performed well in soil stabilization.

The two noxious weeds found in this area are halogeaton and cheatgrass. Both of these species are found throughout the area. Halogeaton has the ability to rapidly colonize disturbed areas, but is easily controlled by successful revegetation. Cheatgrass is found throughout the area in all of the plant communities. This specie can hinder reclamation because of its highly competitive nature. Non-native species have been shown to out-compete cheatgrass. Noxious weeds, such as knapweeds, transported on site by construction equipment and support vehicles would also be of concern.

Impact of Proposed Action: Using the proposed non-native seed mix would adequately stabilize soils. These species have not been shown to move off site or to interbreed with adjacent plant species.

With prompt control of any noxious weeds that occur on the project area there would not be any adverse impacts to the adjacent plant communities. Prompt reclamation would prevent cheatgrass and halogeaton from establishing.

*Impact of No Action Alternative***:** There would be no impacts.

Mitigative Measures: Use Seed Mix #2 for reclamation. In accordance with Condition of Approval #179 from Appendix B of the White River ROD/RMP, application of herbicides must be under field supervision of an EPA-certified pesticide applicator. Herbicides must be registered by the EPA and application proposals must be approved by the BLM.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: Non-game populations associated with these ranges are widespread and common throughout sagebrush and juniper habitats in this Resource Area (e.g., green-tailed and spotted towhee, vesper and lark sparrows). There are no specialized or narrowly endemic species known to occupy the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Although this action would represent an incremental and longer term reduction in the extent of sagebrush habitat available for migratory bird breeding functions, implementation of this project would have no measurable influence on the abundance or distribution of breeding migratory birds even at the smallest landscape scale.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Incremental reductions of sagebrush rangelands would not occur at this time or place.

Mitigation: None.

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: There are no known hazardous or other solid wastes on the subject lands. No hazardous materials are known to have been used, stored or disposed of at this site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: No listed or extremely hazardous materials in excess of threshold quantities are proposed for use in this project. While commercial preparations of fuels and lubricants proposed for use may contain some hazardous constituents, they would be stored, used and transported in a manner consistent with applicable laws, and the generation of hazardous wastes would not be anticipated.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No hazardous or other solid wastes would be generated under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: The operator shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by this project.

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Affected Environment: A review of the Colorado's 1989 Nonpoint Source Assessment Report (plus updates), the 305(b) report, the 303(d) list and the Unified Watershed Assessment was done to see if any water quality concerns have been identified. These wells are located un-named tributaries to Cottonwood Creek, which is tributary to the White River and is considered to be a Category 1, Priority 2, watershed (The Lower White) identified in the Unified Watershed Assessment report. In addition, the State has classified this reach as a "Use Protected" segment. Its designated beneficial uses are: Warm Aquatic Life 2, Recreation 2, and Agriculture. The antidegredation review requirements in the Antidegredation Rule are not applicable to waters designated use-protected. For those waters, only the protection specified in each reach will apply. For this reach, minimum standards for three parameters have been listed. These parameters are: dissolved oxygen = 5.0 mg/l, pH = 6.5 - 9.0 and Fecal Coliform = 2000/100ml.

Water quality data is not available for these upper reaches of Cottonwood Creek. These segments of stream are considered to be ephemeral, which means they flow in direct response to winter snow melt and late summer/fall rainstorms. Water quality of precipitation is considered to be of good quality, but can be high is sediment depending on the magnitude and duration of the storm event.

Oil and Gas operations are considered to be a light industrial activity by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. As industrial dischargers the applicant is required to obtain a permit authorizing the discharge of stormwater from these well pads and roads and show how the lessee will prevent sediment from entering the surrounding water ways.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Fragile watersheds that have very high erosion potential (i.e. Cottonwood Creek) are frequently high in salts and can contribute to increased salinity loads to the White River and the Colorado River Basin. Annual runoff is dynamic and dependent on some aspects we control, such as the amount of vegetation retained for watershed protection and vegetation density. Depleting this vegetation cover needed to protect watersheds from raindrop impact and runoff could cause long-term erosion and water quality problems for Cottonwood Creek and on downstream. BMPs are needed to re-establish a protective vegetative cover and to collect sediment during runoff events

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Impacts from the no-action alternative are not anticipated.

Mitigation: Submit a copy of the Stormwater Discharge Plan, which is required by the State identifying how BMPs will be used to reduce stormwater discharge. Apply Conditions of Approval, (BMPs) listed in Appendix B, in the White River RMP to help minimize surface disturbing impacts.

4. When preparing the site, all suitable topsoil should be stripped from the surface of the location and stockpiled for reclamation. For the interim, if the topsoil is stockpiled on slopes exceeding five percent, construct a berm or trench below the stockpile. Once construction is completed, reclaim as much of the pad that is not needed for maintenance of the well facility.

6. All sediment control structures or disposal pits will be designed to contain a 100-year, 6-hour storm event. Storage volumes within these structures will have a design life of 25 years.

8. All activity shall cease when soils or road surfaces become saturated to a depth of three inches unless otherwise approved by the Authorized Officer.

24. Provide vegetative or artificial stabilization of cut and fill slopes in the design process. Avoid establishment of vegetation where it inhibits drainage from the road surface or where it restricts safety or maintenance.

35. Eliminate undesirable berms that retard normal surface runoff. Fill material associated with construction of this project shall not be deposited in ephemeral draws adjacent to two of these wells.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: Water quality of this drainage is well within the standards set by the state. The proposed action will have no effect on meeting this standard.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:

No ACEC's, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, Wilderness Study Areas, or Wild and Scenic Rivers exist within the area affected by the proposed action. The Public Land Health Standard for wetland or riparian systems is not applicable to this action, since neither the proposed or no-action alternative would have any influence on populations of, or habitats potentially occupied by, special status plants or animals. There are also no Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action.

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The following elements must be addressed due to the involvement of Standards for Public Land Health:

SOILS (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Affected Environment: Baseline soils data have been collected for Rio Blanco County by the NRCS and are published in an order III Soil Survey. This survey is available for review from the White River Field Office. Well pads are on soil mapping unit 74; Rentsac-Moyerson-Rock outcrop complex, on 5 to 65 percent slopes.

This map unit is on foothills and ridges. Areas are irregular in shape and are 160 to 5,000 acres in size. The native vegetation is mainly pinyon and juniper trees with an understory of shrubs and grasses. Elevation is 5,800 to 7,200 feet. The average annual precipitation is 13 to 16 inches, the average annual air temperature is 42 to 45 degrees F, and the average frost-free period is 75 to 105 days.

This unit is 40 percent Rentsac channery loam that has slopes of 5 to 50 percent, 25 percent Moyerson stony clay loam that has slopes of 15 to 65 percent, and 20 percent Rock outcrop that has slopes of 5 to 65 percent. The Moyerson soil is mainly in the lower lying areas of the unit. The components of this unit are so intricately intermingled that it was not practical to map them separately at the scale used.

The Rentsac soil is shallow and well drained. It formed in residuum derived dominantly from sandstone. Typically, the surface layer is grayish brown channery loam about 5 inches thick. The next layer is brown very channery loam about 4 inches thick. The underlying material is very pale brown extremely flaggy loam 7 inches thick. Sandstone is at a depth of 16 inches. Depth to sandstone ranges from 10 to 20 inches. In some areas the surface layer is quite variable in texture. Permeability of the Rentsac soil is moderately rapid. Available water capacity is very low. Effective rooting depth is 10 to 20 inches. Runoff is medium, and the hazard of water erosion is moderate to very high.

The Moyerson soil is shallow and well drained. It formed in residuum derived dominantly from shale. Typically, the surface layer is light gray stony clay loam about 2 inches

thick. The next layer is gray clay loam about 8 inches thick. The underlying material is gray clay 7 inches thick. Shale is at a depth of 17 inches. Depth to shale ranges from 10 to 20 inches. In some areas the surface layer is silty clay loam, silty clay, light clay, or bouldery clay loam. Permeability of the Moyerson soil is slow. Available water capacity is low. Effective rooting depth is 10 to 20 inches. Runoff is medium to rapid, and the hazard of water erosion is very high.

The Rentsac soil is in Pinyon-Juniper woodland site, and the Moyerson soil is in Clayey Slopes range site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: General impacts associated with oil and gas and road development include but are not limited to, loss of topsoil, soil compaction and possible increase in sediment loads to the White River. The primary surface-disturbing impact would be a potential increase in sediment transport from runoff events after the protective vegetative cover has been removed.

BMPs used to slow runoff, trap sediment and prepare reclaimed areas for seeding would help reduce soil loss. With an explanation of how these BMPs will be used and implementation of these BMPs, impacts are expected to be short in duration, during the construction phase and for a short time after construction until successful reclamation is achieved.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Impacts are not anticipated from not permitting the proposed action.

Mitigation: Submit a copy of the Stormwater Discharge Plan, which is required by the State identifying how BMPs will be used to reduce stormwater discharge. Use Standard Seed mix # 2 for the range sites identified. In addition, the following COA's from Appendix B, White River ROD should be applied.

96. Water bars or dikes shall be constructed on all of the rights-of-way, and across the full width of the disturbed area, as directed by the authorized officer.

97. Slopes within the disturbed area shall be stabilized by non-vegetative practices designed to hold the soil in place and minimize erosion. Vegetative cover shall be reestablished to increase infiltration and provide additional protection from erosion.

98. When erosion is anticipated, sediment barriers shall be constructed to slow runoff, allow deposition of sediment, and prevent it from leaving the site. In addition, straining or filtration mechanisms may also contribute to sediment removal from runoff.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils: The described plant communities meet the standards for plant health. This status will not change with the proposed action.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The project area is primarily salt desert shrub with junipers growing on ridgetops. These salt desert shrub vegetation associations are on sites with relatively clayey soils, high salt content and relatively low precipitation 10-12 inches. Junipers are found on shallow, rocky soils primarily ridge tops.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Following reclamation these vegetation sites have relatively good success at establishment of perennial vegetation cover. The salt desert shrub type should be adequately reclaimed in 3-5 years with the native community dominating within 20 years. The juniper woodland would establish cover suitable for soil retention within 3-5 years and initial establishment of junipers in 15-20 years. Development of a late seral community would take 150-200 years.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial)*:* The above described plant communities meet the standards for plant health. This status will not change with the proposed action.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: There is no aquatic wildlife within this project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: None.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None.

Mitigation: None.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): There is no aquatic wildlife within this project area.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: 4-8-1S-103: This pad includes a 0.3 mile road along a ridge top through sagebrush and forbs. The area shows signs of extensive grazing, most likely by domestic livestock, as sheep are numerous in the area. A few young junipers occur on and adjacent to the pad, which like the road, is predominantly sagebrush. The road and pad have a northern aspect with pinyon-juniper woodlands occurring downslope and north of the pad. The elevation is 5776 feet and the location falls within normal winter range for mule deer. Surrounding pinyon-juniper woodlands and rimrock holds moderate to high potential for raptor nests, though none were observed during a field visit on 26 March 2004. This well is also in relatively close proximity to 4-7-1S-103 (1/4 mile or less).

14-18-1S-103: The location is located at 5700 feet on a northern aspect consisting of sagebrush, greasewood with some young juniper encroachment. No raptor nesting habitat exists within the project area and no nests were observed on the rocky cliffs 0.75 miles to the west. The location falls within normal winter range for mule deer.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The construction of this project will result in a long-term increase of road traffic associated with commercial oil/gas related activities. It will result in a net loss of sagebrush habitat of approximately 5.01 acres. The development of oil/gas facilities in areas previously undisturbed by commercial oil/gas activities results in incremental reductions of normal winter range habitat for big game, as well as an increase in the disturbance from additional road traffic. Additionally, it will result in increased activity in an area holding generally high potential for nesting by raptors.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Failure to construct this well package would reduce short-term construction activity levels in this area as well as longer term activity associated with increased road traffic related to commercial oil/gas development. No net loss of sagebrush habitat would occur at this time or place.

Mitigation: A locked gate shall be placed at well 8-18-1S-103 where the road leaves the pad heading northeast towards well 13-17-1S-103 and ultimately 14-18-1S-103 (also a condition in EA-04-063 regarding 13-17-1S-103) to preclude motorized vehicle use and avoid disturbance to big game.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): This project would not jeopardize the viability of any animal population. It would have no significant consequence on terrestrial habitat condition, utility, or function, nor have any discernible affect on animal abundance or distribution at any landscape scale. This public land health standard will thus be met.

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, those brought forward for analysis will be formatted as shown above.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access and Transportation		X	
Cadastral Survey	X		
Fire Management	X		
Forest Management		X	
Geology and Minerals			X
Hydrology/Water Rights	X		
Law Enforcement		X	
Paleontology			X
Rangeland Management			
Realty Authorizations		X	

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Recreation			
Socio-Economics		X	
Visual Resources			X
Wild Horses	X		

GEOLOGY AND MINERALS

Affected Environment: The surface geologic formation of the well locations is Green River and Evergreen's targeted zone is in the Mancos. During drilling potential water, coal, oil and gas zones will be encountered from surface to the targeted zone. These wells are located on existing Federal Oil and Gas leases COC-10178 and COC-56873.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Cementing procedure of the proposed actions isolates the formations and will prevent the migration of gas, water, and oil between formations. The coal zones located the Mesaverde will also be isolated during this procedure. Development of these wells will deplete the hydrocarbon resources in the targeted formation.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

PALEONTOLOGY

Affected Environment: #4-8-1S-103 well pad, access road and well tie pipeline: the proposed well pad, access and well tie pipeline appear to be near the boundary between the Wasatch Formation, which the BLM has classified as a Category I formation and the Douglas Creek Formation (Tweto 1979), which the BLM has classified as a Category II formation. Category I formations are know to produce scientifically important fossil resources. Category II formations are those formations where the fossil bearing potential is not clearly understood and further research is necessary.

#14-18-1S-103 well pad, access road and well tie pipeline: the proposed well pad, access and well tie are in an area mapped as the Douglas Creek member of the Green River formation (Tweto 1979) which the BLM has classified as a Category II formation. Category II formations are those formations where the fossil bearing potential is not clearly understood and further research is necessary.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: #4-8-1S-103 well pad, access and well tie pipeline: should it become necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formation to construct the road, bury the well tie pipeline, level the well pad or excavate the reserve/blooie pit there is the potential to adversely impact scientifically important fossil resources. The

potential to impact the resources is know to be quite high in the Wasatch Formation and unknown in the Douglas Creek member of the Green River.

#14-18-1S103 well pad, access and well tie pipeline: should it become necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formation to construct the road, bury the well tie pipeline, level the well pad or excavate the reserve/blooie pit there is the potential to adversely impact scientifically important fossil resources. However, it is unknown how high the potential for impacting scientifically important fossils is in the Douglas Creek member of the Green River Formation.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to fossil resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: #4-8-1S-103 well pad, access road and well tie pipeline: all exposed outcrops of stone within the construction zone must be examined by an approved paleontologist for fossil resources and a report detailing the results of the inventory with any recommendations for mitigation of impacts to any fossil resources found must be submitted to the BLM prior to initiation of construction. Any excavation into the underlying bedrock formation shall be monitored by an approved paleontologist. If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during project activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials, and contact the authorized officer (AO). The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best option for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

#14-18-1S-103 well pad, access road and well tie pipeline: all exposed outcrops of stone within the construction zone must be examined by an approved paleontologist for fossil resources and a report detailing the results of the inventory with any recommendations for mitigation of impacts to any fossil resources found must be submitted to the BLM prior to initiation of construction. Any excavation into the underlying bedrock formation shall be monitored by an approved paleontologist. If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during project activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials, and contact the authorized officer (AO). The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best option for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

RANGE MANAGEMENT:

*Affected Environment***:** The proposed project is within the Banta Flats allotment. This allotment is grazed by sheep during the winter and spring.

Impact of Proposed Action: The proposed project would remove one animal unit month (AUM) of important forage for livestock during the life of the project. Halogeaton was discussed in the noxious weed section. This weed is highly toxic to sheep. If disturbed soils are reclaimed promptly there would not be a problem with this weed. Using sheep wire on all pits would prevent access to livestock.

Impact of No Action Alternative: There would be no adverse impacts.

Mitigative Measures: The operator will install sheep wire fencing to prevent livestock from accessing all constructed pits. Also, in accordance with Condition of Approval #181 from Appendix B of the White River ROD/RMP, reclamation should be implemented concurrent with construction and site operations to the fullest extent possible. Final reclamation actions shall be initiated within six months of the termination of operations unless otherwise approved in writing by the Authorized officer.

REALTY AUTHORIZATIONS

Affected Environment: The proposed access requires a right-of-way for the access road.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action will require an amendment to Evergreen's existing right-of-way, COC64597, for access to the 13-17 and 4-8 wells. The access road to the 14-18 is covered under right-of-way COC66797.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: The no action alternative would not approve the construction of the new access road and things would remain status quo.

Mitigation: None

RECREATION

Affected Environment: The proposed action occurs within the White River Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA). BLM custodially manages the ERMA to provide for unstructured recreation activities such as hunting, dispersed camping, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and off-highway vehicle use.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The public will lose approximately 5 acres of dispersed recreation potential while wells are in operation. The public will most likely not recreate in the vicinity of these facilities and will be dispersed elsewhere. If action coincides with hunting seasons (September through November) it will most likely disrupt the experience sought by those recreationists and will most likely result in complaints from hunters that have historically used this area.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No loss of dispersed recreation potential and no impact to hunting recreationists.

Mitigation: None.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed actions are located within a VRM class II area. The objective of the VRM II classification is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the

basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed actions for #4-8 and #14-18 would be located on two adjacent extensive benches between Cottonwood Creek and Gilsonite Ridge. #4-8 would be visible for a brief period of time from the road in Cottonwood Creek, but production facilities should blend with the backdrop of pinyon/juniper vegetation when painted Juniper Green. A casual observer traveling along the road in Cottonwood Creek would not be able to view #14-18. The level of change to the characteristic landscape would be low, the proposed actions would not attract the attention of the casual observer, and the objective of the VRM II classification would be retained.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no environmental impacts from the no action alternative.

Mitigation: Use low profile production facilities and paint all production equipment Juniper Green.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: No cumulative impacts were identified. The White River PRMP/FEIS analyzed cumulative impacts of resource-area-wide oil and gas development.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED:

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Caroline Hollowed	Hydrologist	Air Quality
Tamara Meagley	NRS	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Tamara Meagley	NRS	Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
Michael Selle	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources Paleontological Resources
Bob Fowler	Range Management Specialist	Invasive, Non-Native Species
Glenn Klingler	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds
Glenn Klingler	Wildlife Biologist	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Wildlife
Marty O'Mara	Hazmat Collateral	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
Caroline Hollowed	Hydrologist	Water Quality, Surface and Ground Hydrology and Water Rights
Glenn Klingler	Wildlife Biologist	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	ORP	Wilderness
Caroline Hollowed	Hydrologist	Soils
Bob Fowler	Range Management Specialist	Vegetation

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Glenn Klingler	Wildlife biologist	Wildlife Terrestrial and Aquatic
Chris Ham	ORP	Access and Transportation
Ken Holsinger	NRS	Fire Management
Bob Fowler	Range Management Specialist	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Bob Fowler	Range Management Specialist	Rangeland Management
Penny Brown	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Chris Ham	ORP	Recreation
Keith Whitaker	Natural Resource Specialist	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	Natural Resource Specialist	Wild Horses

Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (FONSI/DR)

CO-110-2004- 082 -EA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE: The environmental assessment and analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures (listed below) result in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

DECISION/RATIONALE: : It is my decision to approve the proposed action with the mitigation measures listed below. The proposed action is consistent with the White River ROD/RMP and, with mitigation would cause only minimal environmental impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

1. The operator will utilize dust abatement measures to control fugitive dust as needed.

2. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

3. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you

must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

4. All disturbed sites shall be promptly reclaimed to the satisfaction of the Area Manger.

5. Reclamation should be implemented concurrent with construction and site operations to the fullest extent possible. Final reclamation actions shall be initiated within six months of the termination of operations unless otherwise approved in writing by the Authorized Officer.

6. The goal for rehabilitation of any disturbed area shall be the permanent restoration of original site conditions and productive capability.

7. Use Standard Seed Mix #2 for reclamation of the project area:

Seed Mix #	Species (Variety)	Lbs PLS/ Acre	Range sites
2	Western wheatgrass (Arriba) Pubescent wheatgrass (Luna) Russian wildrye (Bozoisky) Crested wheatgrass (Fairway/Ephraim) Yellow sweetclover (Madrid) Fourwing saltbush (Wytana/Rincon)	3 2 2 2 0.5 2	Alkaline Slopes, Clayey Foothills, Clayey Slopes, Claypan, Mountain Shale

8. Application of herbicides must be under field supervision of an EPA-certified pesticide applicator. Herbicides must be registered by the EPA and application proposals must be approved by the BLM.

9. The operator shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by this project

10. Submit a copy of the Stormwater Discharge Plan, which is required by the State identifying how BMPs will be used to reduce stormwater discharge.

11. When preparing the site, all suitable topsoil should be stripped from the surface of the location and stockpiled for reclamation. For the interim, if the topsoil is stockpiled on slopes exceeding five percent, construct a berm or trench below the stockpile. Once construction is completed, reclaim as much of the pad that is not needed for maintenance of the well facility.

12. All sediment control structures or disposal pits will be designed to contain a 100-year, 6-hour storm event. Storage volumes within these structures will have a design life of 25 years.

13. All activity shall cease when soils or road surfaces become saturated to a depth of three inches unless otherwise approved by the Authorized Officer.

14. Provide vegetative or artificial stabilization of cut and fill slopes in the design process. Avoid establishment of vegetation where it inhibits drainage from the road surface or where it restricts safety or maintenance.

15. Eliminate undesirable berms that retard normal surface runoff. Fill material associated with construction of this project shall not be deposited in ephemeral draws adjacent to two of these wells.

16. Water bars or dikes shall be constructed on all of the rights-of-way, and across the full width of the disturbed area, as directed by the authorized officer.

17. Slopes within the disturbed area shall be stabilized by non-vegetative practices designed to hold the soil in place and minimize erosion. Vegetative cover shall be reestablished to increase infiltration and provide additional protection from erosion.

18. When erosion is anticipated, sediment barriers shall be constructed to slow runoff, allow deposition of sediment, and prevent it from leaving the site. In addition, straining or filtration mechanisms may also contribute to sediment removal from runoff.

19. A locked gate shall be placed at well 8-18-1S-103 where the road leaves the pad heading northeast towards well 13-17-1S-103 and ultimately 14-18-1S-103 (also a condition in EA-04-063 regarding 13-17-1S-103) to preclude motorized vehicle use and avoid disturbance to big game.

20. For well pad #4-8-1S-103,the access road and well tie pipeline: all exposed outcrops of stone within the construction zone must be examined by an approved paleontologist for fossil resources and a report detailing the results of the inventory with any recommendations for mitigation of impacts to any fossil resources found must be submitted to the BLM prior to initiation of construction.

21. Any excavation into the underlying bedrock formation shall be monitored by an approved paleontologist. If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during project activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials, and contact the authorized officer (AO). The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best option for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

22. For well pad #14-18-1S-103, access road and well tie pipeline: all exposed outcrops of stone within the construction zone must be examined by an approved paleontologist for fossil resources and a report detailing the results of the inventory with any recommendations for mitigation of impacts to any fossil resources found must be submitted to the BLM prior to initiation of construction.

23. Any excavation into the underlying bedrock formation shall be monitored by an approved paleontologist. If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during project activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials, and contact the authorized officer (AO). The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best option for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

24. The operator will install sheep wire fencing to prevent livestock from accessing all constructed pits.

25. Reclamation will be implemented concurrent with construction and site operations to the fullest extent possible. Final reclamation actions shall be initiated within six months of the termination of operations unless otherwise approved in writing by the Authorized officer.

26. Use low profile production facilities and paint all production equipment Juniper Green.

NAME OF PREPARER: Keith W Whitaker 4/27/04

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline P. Hollowed 4/27/04

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: _____
Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 4/28/04

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Location of Proposed Action
CO-110-2004-082-EA